

IN THE CLAIMS:

1-2. (Canceled)

3. (Original) A semiconductor device, comprising a gate electrode formed over a gate insulating film and a hard mask formed over the gate electrode.

4. (Currently Amended) A semiconductor device, comprising:  
a gate electrode formed over a gate insulating film;  
a hard mask formed over the gate electrode, and  
a conductive film which is ~~to serve as a wire for sending a signal to the gate electrode or as a connection layer for connecting the wire with the gate electrode and~~ is in contact with the gate electrode,

wherein the conductive film is to serve as a wire for sending a signal to the gate electrode or as a connection layer for connecting a wire with the gate electrode.

5-8. (Canceled)

9. (Original) A semiconductor device, according to claim 3, wherein the gate electrode is selected from the group consisting of tantalum nitride and tungsten.

10. (Original) A semiconductor device, according to claim 3, wherein the hard mask is selected from the group consisting of silicon oxide.

11. (Original) A semiconductor device, according to claim 4, wherein the gate electrode is selected from the group consisting of tantalum nitride and tungsten.

12. (Original) A semiconductor device, according to claim 4, wherein the hard mask is selected from the group consisting of silicon oxide.

13. (Original) A semiconductor device, according to claim 4, wherein the conductive film is selected from the group consisting of tantalum nitride and tungsten.

14. (New) A semiconductor device, comprising:  
a gate electrode formed over a gate insulating film; and,  
an island shaped hard mask formed over the gate electrode,  
wherein side walls of the island shaped hard mask have an angle of inclination of  $0^{\circ}$   
or more, and of  $90^{\circ}$  or less.
15. (New) A semiconductor device, comprising:  
a gate electrode formed over a gate insulating film; and,  
an island shaped hard mask formed over the gate electrode,  
wherein side walls of the island shaped hard mask forms arc shapes.
16. (New) A semiconductor device, according to claim 14, wherein the angle is  
inclination of  $35^{\circ}$  or more, and  $50^{\circ}$  or less.
17. (New) A semiconductor device, according to claim 14, wherein the gate electrode  
is selected from the group consisting of tantalum nitride and tungsten.
18. (New) A semiconductor device, according to claim 14, wherein the island shaped  
hard mask is selected from the group consisting of silicon oxide.
19. (New) A semiconductor device, according to claim 15, wherein the gate electrode  
is selected from the group consisting of tantalum nitride and tungsten.
20. (New) A semiconductor device, according to claim 15, wherein the island shaped  
hard mask is selected from the group consisting of silicon oxide.
21. (New) A semiconductor device, comprising:  
a gate electrode formed over a gate insulating film;  
an island shaped hard mask formed over the gate electrode; and  
a conductive film which is in contact with the gate electrode,

wherein the conductive film is to serve as a wire for sending a signal to the gate electrode or as a connection layer for connecting a wire with the gate electrode, and  
wherein side walls of the island shaped hard mask have an angle of inclination of  $0^{\circ}$  or more, and of  $90^{\circ}$  or less.

22. (New) A semiconductor device, comprising:  
a gate electrode formed over a gate insulating film;  
an island shaped hard mask formed over the gate electrode; and  
a conductive film which is in contact with the gate electrode,  
wherein the conductive film is to serve as a wire for sending a signal to the gate electrode or as a connection layer for connecting a wire with the gate electrode, and  
wherein side walls of the island shaped hard mask forms arc shapes.

23. (New) A semiconductor device, according to claim 21, wherein the angle is inclination of  $35^{\circ}$  or more, and  $50^{\circ}$  or less.

24. (New) A semiconductor device, according to claim 21, wherein the gate electrode is selected from the group consisting of tantalum nitride and tungsten.

25. (New) A semiconductor device, according to claim 21, wherein the island shaped hard mask is selected from the group consisting of silicon oxide.

26. (New) A semiconductor device, according to claim 22, wherein the gate electrode is selected from the group consisting of tantalum nitride and tungsten.

27. (New) A semiconductor device, according to claim 22, wherein the island shaped hard mask is selected from the group consisting of silicon oxide.